

Oppegard, Ole

(1846–1934)

EUGENIO DI DIONISIO

Eugenio Di Dionisio

Ole Oppegard, a pioneer from Norway, served in Argentina as a literature evangelist and as the first Adventist missionary in South America dedicated to medical missionary efforts.¹

Born October 31, 1846, in Oslo, Norway, he studied at a military academy. At age 25 he moved to the United States, where he encountered and accepted Adventist doctrines. He went to Battle Creek, Michigan, where he enrolled in Battle Creek College as well as taking nursing classes at Battle Creek Sanitarium to prepare himself for medical missionary work.²

Arriving in Buenos Aires September 4, 1895,³ he worked mostly with English and Scandinavian people, providing hydrotherapy treatments and massages, teaching health principles, baking whole grain bread. In addition, he sold Adventist religious and health publications. Active in Buenos Aires, Tandil, Necochea, and other places in the province of Buenos Aires,⁴ he was a founding member of the church in the city of Buenos Aires, as well as Florida, located in the suburban area of greater Buenos Aires. For a while church services took place in the main room of his house.⁵ Oppegard dedicated about three decades to his self-supporting missionary service, mostly in Buenos Aires.

Oppegard married Lidia Greene (1875-1960), on May 5, 1899, who assisted him as an interpreter. On October 30, 1897, Nelson Z. Town had baptized her and her mother, Rachel Betts de Greene, in the Riachuelo River.⁶ For almost 20 years, Lidia served on the editorial staff of Buenos Aires Publishing House.⁷



Ole Oppergard

Photo courtesy of Brazilian White Center - UNASP.

On March 22, 1906, the South American Union Conference (currently the South American Division), at a meeting in the city of Parana, capital of the province Entre Rios, Argentina, decided to relocate the publishing house from the Diamante School (currently River Plate Adventist University), in Entre Ríos. The session also voted to also acquire the property of Ole Oppegard, located at the corner of Echeverría and Valentín Vergara streets, in Florida, province of Buenos Aires, at the low price of 1,060 pesos. In addition, the union purchased a plot owned by Frank H. Westphal for 638 pesos, again a price markedly less than its market value.⁸ Both properties are now part of the headquarters of the Argentine Union.

After a noted life as a skilled nurse and self-supporting literature evangelist, Ole Oppegard died February 20, 1934, at Florida, Buenos Aires, without ever returning to his home country.

SOURCES

Casella, Aldo S. and Carlos A. Steger. *Cien años de bendiciones* [100 years of blessings]. Buenos Aires: South America Spanish Publishing House, 2004.

Murray, W. E. "Obituaries." *ARH*, April 19, 1934.

Murray, W. E. "Obituary." *South American Bulletin*, April 1934.

Oppegard, Ole. "Buenos Aires." *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], August 1906.

Oppegard, Ole. "Buenos Aires." *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], January 1908.

Oppegard, Ole. "Buenos Aires." *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], June 1908.

Oppegard, Ole. "Buenos Aires." *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], November 1913.

Oppegard, Ole. "The Scandinavian work in Argentina." *The Missionary Magazine*, November 1899.

Peverini, Héctor J. *En las huellas de la Providencia* [In the Footsteps to the Providence]. 1st ed. Buenos Aires: South America Spanish Publishing House, 1988.

Ramos, Daniel. "Lidia Greene de Oppegard." *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], August 1960.

Scholtus de Roscher, Silvia C. *Liderazgo femenino* [Female Leadership]. Libertador San Martín, Entre Ríos: Editorial River Plate Adventist University, 2012.

Snyder, E. W. "Notes from Argentine." *ARH*, April 5, 1898.

The Complete Sabbath-School Record and Register, 1897-1899.

Thomann, E. W. "Necrología" [Obituary]. *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], March 26, 1934.

Westphal, Frank H. "Argentina." *ARH*, June 15, 1897.

NOTES

1. E. W. Snyder, "Notes from Argentine," *ARH*, April 5, 1898, 221. F. H. Westphal, "Argentina," *AHR*, June 15, 1897, 378, 379.
2. E. W. Thomann, "Necrología" [Obituary], *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], March 26, 1934, 16.
3. Ole Oppegard, "The Scandinavian work in Argentina," *The Missionary Magazine*, November 1899, 496.
4. See the following for information about Ole Oppegard: "Buenos Aires," *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], August 1906, 9; "Buenos Aires," *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], January 1908, 8; "Buenos Aires," *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], June 1908, 56; "Buenos Aires," *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], November 1913, 14.
5. W. E. Murray, "Obituaries," *AHR*, April 19, 1934, 22. W. E. Murray, "Obituary," *South American Bulletin*, April 1934, 8.
6. *The Complete Sabbath-School Record and Register*, 1897-1899, 30, 38, 39.
7. Daniel Ramos, "Lidia Greene de Oppegard," *La Revista Adventista* [Adventist Review], August 1960, 15. Archive of Services Registries of the Argentine Union. Lidia Greene de Oppegard, *Sustentation Fund Application*, June 21, 1939. Silvia C. Scholtus de Roscher, *Liderazgo femenino* [Female Leadership] (Libertador San Martín, Entre Ríos: Editorial River Plate Adventist University, 2012), 49-58.
8. Héctor J. Peverini, *En las huellas de la Providencia* [In the Footsteps to the Providence] (Buenos Aires: South America Spanish Publishing House, 1988), 100, 101. Aldo S. Casella and Carlos A. Steger, *Cien años de bendiciones* [100 years of blessings] (Buenos Aires: South America Spanish Publishing House, 2004), 18, 19.

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000